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E31

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PTQ8845

RELEASED IN PART  
B1, 1.4(D)

PAGE 01 CARACA 01478 01 OF 03 241744Z  
ACTION INR-00

INFO LOG-00 NP-00 ACQ-00 WHA-00 PERC-00 DS-00 VC-00  
TEDE-00 VCE-00 AC-01 NSAE-00 ACE-00 EPAE-00 DSCC-00  
DRL-02 NFAT-00 SAS-00 /003W

-----B397BB 241752Z /38

R 241740Z MAY 02  
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6068  
INFO CIA WASHDC  
DIA WASHDC  
NSC WASHDC  
SECDEF WASHDC  
USCINCSO MIAMI FL  
AMEMBASSY BOGOTA  
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA  
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN  
AMEMBASSY LIMA  
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ  
AMEMBASSY QUITO

USINT HAVANA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 CARACAS 001478

INR FOR SALCEDO  
NSC FOR MAISTO  
USCINCSO ALSO FOR POLAD

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E.O. 12958: DECL 05/23/12  
TAGS: PREL, PGOV, PHUM, VE  
SUBJECT: BOLIVARIAN CIRCLES - TAKE TWO

REF: CARACAS 01297

CLASSIFIED BY AMBASSADOR CHARLES S. SHAPIRO. REASONS 1.5  
(B) & (D)

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SUMMARY  
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3. (U) ACCORDING TO A MAY 15 ARTICLE IN "TAL CUAL", LT. COLONEL MIGUEL RODRIGUEZ TORRES -- CURRENT HEAD OF THE DISIP (POLITICAL POLICE) AND FORMER CIRCLES' COORDINATOR -- ALLEGED HE HAD REGISTERED 20,000 CIRCLES BY DECEMBER 2001 AND THAT THE NUMBER OF CIRCLES HAD MUSHROOMED TO 70,000 CIRCLES BY EARLY APRIL 2002. ACCORDING TO A MAY 16 "EL NACIONAL" ARTICLE, FORMER VICE-PRESIDENT AND CURRENT JUSTICE AND INTERIOR MINISTER DIOSDADO CABELLO AND ANOTHER CIRCLE RINGLEADER, BOASTED BEFORE THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY'S SPECIAL COMMISSION THAT THE NUMBER OF CIRCLES HAD SKYROCKETED TO 123,000 POST-APRIL 11. CABELLO ALLEGED EACH CIRCLE HAS 18 MEMBERS, WHICH WOULD TOTAL OVER 2.2 MILLION ADHERENTS, OR ALMOST 10 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION. (COMMENT: CABELLO'S AND BARRETO'S ESTIMATES OF CIRCLE MEMBERSHIP DO NOT COINCIDE. BASED ON BARRETO'S CALCULATIONS, TOTAL CIRCLE MEMBERSHIP WOULD

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RANGE FROM 866,000 TO 1.6 MILLION FOLLOWERS, VERSUS  
CABELLO'S ESTIMATE OF OVER 2.2 MILLION ADHERENTS. END  
COMMENT.)

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ACTION INR-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	ACQ-00	WHA-00	PERC-00	DS-00	VC-00
	TEDE-00	VCE-00	AC-01	NSAE-00	ACE-00	EPAE-00	DSCC-00
	DRL-02	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/003W			

-----B397C5 241752Z /38

R 241740Z MAY 02  
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6069  
INFO CIA WASHDC  
DIA WASHDC  
NSC WASHDC  
SECDEF WASHDC  
USCINCSO MIAMI FL  
AMEMBASSY BOGOTA  
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA  
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN  
AMEMBASSY LIMA  
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ  
AMEMBASSY QUITO

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USINT HAVANA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 03 CARACAS 001478

INR FOR SALCEDO

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8. (U) THE MAY 14 AND 15 EDITIONS OF VENEZUELAN DAILY "TAL CUAL" FEATURED ARTICLES ON THE FBL AND FDR MOVEMENTS. ACCORDING TO "TAL CUAL," FBL LEADER "GERARDO" FORMED FBL ABOUT 2.5 YEARS AGO. WHILE MANY OF ITS ESTIMATED 1,500 MEMBERS RECEIVED TRAINING FROM THE ELN AND MAINTAIN RELATIONS WITH THE COLOMBIAN GUERRILLA GROUP, THE FBL HAS KEPT ITS RELATIONS WITH THE FARC AT ARM'S LENGTH, WRITES "TAL CUAL" JOURNALIST VALENTINA LARES. THERE ALSO APPEARS TO BE SOME CONNECTION BETWEEN THE FBL AND TWO OLDER PARAMILITARY GROUPS: THE "VENECOS," WHICH HAD BOTH VENEZUELAN AND COLOMBIAN MEMBERS (GERARDO IS ALSO CALLED "EL VENECO"), AND THE BLACKBIRDS, OR "PAJAROS NEGROS" (SOME FBL MEMBERS REFER TO THEMSELVES AS "PAJAROS NEGROS"). ACCORDING TO LAREZ, THE FBL EXTORTS MONEY AND GOODS FROM LOCAL FARMERS AND THREATENS TO KILL ANYONE WHO REFUSES TO COOPERATE, WHILE THE FDR MONITORS LOCAL RESIDENTS AND COLLECTS DATA ON CITIZENS WHO REFUSE TO PARTICIPATE IN LOCAL BOLIVARIAN CIRCLES. MANY FARMERS HAVE ABANDONED THEIR LANDS RATHER THAN RISK THE WRATH OF FBL MILITANTS.

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ACTION INR-00

INFO LOG-00 NP-00 ACQ-00 WHA-00 PERC-00 DS-00 VC-00  
TEDE-00 VCE-00 AC-01 NSAE-00 ACE-00 EPAE-00 DSCC-00  
DRL-02 NFAT-00 SAS-00 /003W  
-----B397CE 241752Z /38

R 241740Z MAY 02  
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6070  
INFO CIA WASHDC  
DIA WASHDC  
NSC WASHDC  
SECDEF WASHDC  
USCINCSO MIAMI FL  
AMEMBASSY BOGOTA  
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA  
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN  
AMEMBASSY LIMA  
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ  
AMEMBASSY QUITO

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REFERS TO AN ALLEGED LEFTIST BOLIVARIAN

CONSPIRACY AND TRACES ITS RENAISSANCE TO THE SAO PAULO FORUM OF 1990. REPRESENTING VENEZUELA AT THE FORUM WERE FORMER CHAVEZ MILITANT PABLO MEDINA AND CURRENT PDVSA PRESIDENT ALI RODRIGUEZ, ASSERTS THE AUTHOR. CARLOS BALL, A WELL-RESPECTED VENEZUELAN JOURNALIST ASSOCIATED WITH THE CATO INSTITUTE ALSO REPORTED IN A FEBRUARY 27, 2002 CATO ARTICLE THAT MEDIAN AND RODRIQUEZ REPRESENTED  
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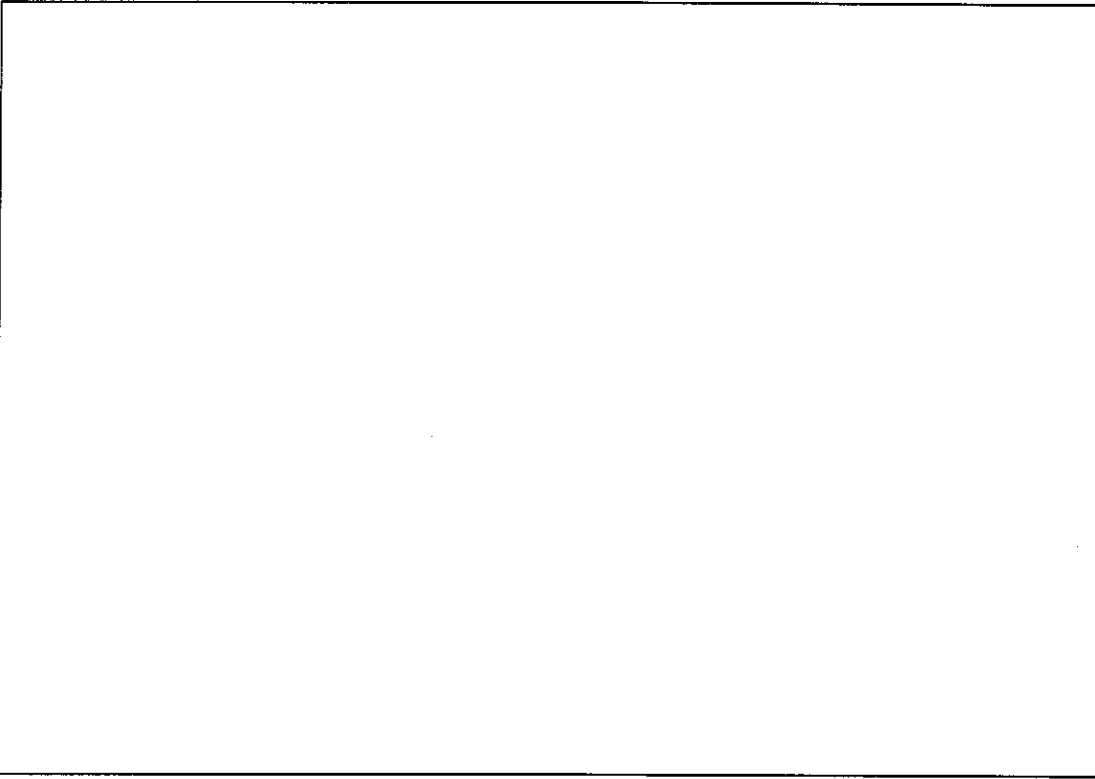
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VENEZUELA AT THE 1990 SAO PAULO FORUM. END NOTE.)

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